

عبدالله بن محمد



the employers think they have. Even the industrial relations of the public sector can ever be kept on an even keel if the employers, egged on by the Government, simply resist from their commitments is beyond comprehension. When the next round of Burnham gets under way in the New Year, there will be no serious negotiation. It is already being pointed out that this will wreck any chance of getting agreement on a new teachers' contract of service.

To provide a sinister commentary on the Government's announcement, there is the latest short-term forecast of the group of economists known as Cambridge Econometrics which expects unemployment to rise to three million over the next two years. The more gloomy you

The local authorities have to make their own realistic estimates of inflation when they draw up their own budgets. Similarly, they have to come to their own conclusions about the feasibility of pushing through wage settlements at 6 per cent. The shameful stance which the unfortunate Sir Gervus Walker has felt obliged to adopt towards the framers—directly repudiating the agreement which ended the last fire service dispute—is a measure of the lack of flexibility which

to be the first time the Government invoke the cumbersome machinery of setting aside an arbitration award. . . . Before expending too much righteous indignation, the teachers would be wise to wait and see what happens to the economy at large. If the economy goes contracting, a 6 per cent increase could seem pretty reasonable. In spite of many premature warnings teachers have not yet been among the many occupational groups which have experienced compulsory redundancy. No more about that. But among those groups who have, are many (including some ten thousand miles from where this is being written) who have been put out of work by the success of their own union in forcing up caste and restricting flexibility. Teachers may well resent having to accept lower pay rises in return for greater security which their employers still offers, but the realists among them would regard it as a 'not altogether' acceptable bargain.

Reference is made in some important studies—as, for example, the scheme organized by the Past Office, in conjunction with the Technical Education Council for upgrading student technicians—but in Mr. Colvin's opinion "the economic and social

One can imagine the sort of silken advocacy which Mr. Carlisle's sur- "Don't worry," Secretary of State, better put it in the hands of the people since it was in the manifesto but no need to force anybody to do anything. Local authorities bound to kick up a fuss—you can't do that with them on the ministerial procedure and the information for parents and general public for the governing bodies slide. A sort of "let it be."

# London on a hiding to nothing

What the report does not do is make comparisons between the state of education in London and other big cities. It describes the background, it opines the schools, it is kinder about primary and further education than it is about comprehensive schools. It is kinder about the state of the country as a whole. The kind of criticism which is brought out is the kind which has run through recent primary and secondary surveys: much class teaching pitched at the mid- to the ability range which fails to attract the able pupils and offers less than it should to the less able. The use of uncoloured quotations is a damnable device to stitch together, but probably never closing.

The inspectors' criticisms are mainly attitudes and expectations—the tendency to teach staff to demand or expect more from pupils—but these attitudes can necessarily be changed by spending more money. London is already much involved in organizing in-service training for its most authorities. As a very big school does London get 100 pence of value

**Employees** — Because of layoffs, enrollments and exodus from the profession, the number of teachers in Santa Clara County is estimated to be 9,804 this year, a drop of 1,080 or 9.8 per cent from last year. Administrative ranks are expected to be about the same. — From the San Jose Mercury News, August 21, 1980.

Mr. Peter Newsam, ILEA's education officer, who asked for the rule of HMI confidentiality to be waived in the public interest, welcomed the report. "Properly used the report should give a new impetus to our work," he said. "In his view it is much which justifies a unified

But irrespective of how the first three years are organized, "many pupils enter year four unprepared to face O level or CSE with any justifiable confidence".

**Clash over restoring cuts:** A row has brewed over ILEA's budget for next year, writes Biddy Pasmarene. Left-wingers will be pushing hard for restoration of the £21m cut made in this year's budget, in line with the Labour manifesto for next year's GLC elections.

At a recent weekend meeting to

ment workers would cost an extra £290m a year. The teachers' salary bill would rise by £210m and that of college lecturers by £46.2m.

Against that, union leaders argue that—since research showed that inflation was still running at about 16 per cent—a 5 per cent rise was

Maewhille, moves are being made towards a review of the teachers' salary structure by the Burnham committee's management panel. This could lead to scrapping the points score system which determines the number of senior school posts.

## Oxford University Press

The Inner London Education Authority says that its £1.5m programme to provide support centres for disruptive pupils is a success.

In the first annual monitoring report which was presented to the schools subcommittee this week, it says this initiative is helping pupils for whom it is intended. Nearly 2,000 pupils use the 146 centres each term.

However, the report points out

The school inspectorate has confirmed that in education more money means higher standards.

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DES administrators had put forward a system based on their own calculations of whether an LHA had been overspending or under-spending in the past, taking into account special factors as well as unit costs. On this basis, the LHA was suggested that come up with a plan to increase its share of the block grants than they had out of former methods of calculating reimbursement but that others, especially ILEA, would do worse, since available for special factors, they seemed to have been overspending. Unsurprisingly, their method was challenged, and the HHS was called

proposals for a regional board for the polytechnics and colleges of further education are now being considered in the Department of Science and Science.

It would differ from those introduced in the recent Commonwealth Committee report, which dealt with and officials are holding

...of a body dealing with  
...courses in over 600 insti-  
...the committee proposed  
...thinking is now with  
...body dealing with un-  
...polytechnics and colleges  
...would be selected  
...to their proportion  
...work for at least 50 per  
...the quality of their courses  
...epidemiological section.  
...being stressed in the  
...week that the pro-  
...be still extremely tentative











## Parents can play key role in teaching, research shows

### Home improvements in reading

by Bob Doe

Significant improvements in the reading levels of seven and eight-year-olds can be achieved if schools let parents do some of the teaching according to recent research in the London boroughs of Barking and Haringey.

Getting mothers to hear their children read regularly can be more beneficial than an extra teacher in the class, a research team led by Dr. Jenny Hewison of the Open University said.

Parents are often encouraged by schools to talk and read to their children to help in language development but to stop short of stalling in the actual teaching of

reading for fear of confusing or putting too much pressure on children.

But hearing their child read is apparently the most useful thing parents can do according to this work completed by Dr. Jenny Hewison of Durham University and Dr. Bill Schofield of the Open University.

In a two-year experiment the parents of children in two classes of six-year-olds were encouraged by teachers to hear their children read from books sent home every two days.

By the time they were eight years old, the majority of these children scored above average for their age on reading tests. In comparable

classes in the same working-class district, about two thirds of the class were below the national average for their age.

An extra teacher was provided in another two classes to give extra help with reading. The average of these two classes did not match up to those in which parents had been asked to collaborate, though the researchers were against making too much of this finding.

Dr. Hewison said: "Schools should think of parents as a learning resource that can be used. There is no firm evidence that parents do any harm if they are given the right guidance and encouragement."

## Tighten cash control say MPs

by Biddy Passmore

Tighter departmental control of higher education spending is strongly recommended in a report from the Public Accounts Committee, published last week.

The committee wants a closer watch on postgraduate research students, many of whom fail to complete their PhDs in the allotted time. Evidence from the Social Science Research Council had shown that less than half of the doctoral students they sponsored had obtained their degrees after six years, when they were supposed to take four, the committee says.

"Given the extent to which such candidates are financed from public funds, we think it would be appropriate for DES to consider instituting a more comprehensive review of the performance of publicly financed postgraduate students," the report says.

The MPs say their universities should be given some indication by the Government of how it expects their total grant to be shared between the main spending elements. To help universities plan and make economies, the University Grants Committee should also give them clear reasons for the variation in grant from one university to another, based on the committee's knowledge of costs in different universities.

The committee recommends that each university should be told how many students it is expected to provide for, and that the actual numbers admitted should be monitored. This would enable the UGC to "monitor more effectively the appropriateness of the staff-student ratio in individual universities", it says.

## Wrong lines for women graduates

Far too many women graduates begin their working lives as secretaries in industry and commerce whereas men do not, Mrs. Jane Finkley, a magistrate, told the twenty-fifth anniversary meeting of the New Hall Graduate Society in Cambridge last week.

"One measure of success in fifteen years time would be for women to represent more than their current share of the membership of the Law Society, the Institute of Marketing or the I.C.A. of the Institute of Chartered Accountants", she said.

**education presents**

**Day Schools on film study materials**

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## OVERSEAS NEWS

West Germany

## Marking row breaks out as minister calls for written review of work

by Wellington Long

**BONN** The perennial argument over how to mark school reports has broken out again in West Germany this school year.

In the state of Hesse, the Cultural Affairs Minister, Mr Hans Krollmann, a Social Democrat, has tried unsuccessfully to eliminate the grading of second-year pupils.

A Protestant churchman in Bavaria has been censured by his church superiors for awarding all seventh- and eighth-year pupils in his secondary school the top mark in religious instruction.

Mr Krollmann told Hesse's state Parents' Advisory Board that he thought it counter-productive to continue giving second-year pupils marks from one to six in individual subjects and for diligence, department, attendance and illness.

"Instead, a child's learning development, his attitude towards work, his performance, his particular strengths and weaknesses, his social attitude and conduct should be reviewed at the end of the term in written form," Mr Krollmann proposed.

He said it was a mistake to

assume that the pressure of getting good marks enhances a child's willingness to study.

The Minister added that schools in the states of Lower Saxony, North Rhine-Westphalia and Hamburg already have adopted his idea. Baden-Württemberg and Bremen have gone part of the way—schools in those states analyze the work of second-year pupils in a written review, but also give specific marks for work in German and mathematics.

The Parents' Advisory Board vetoed Mr Krollmann's proposal. Members said children and parents understood the grading system, while a written analysis often would go over their heads.

Pastor Horst Seeger in the Bavarian town of Rothen ran into trouble with his superiors by giving everyone in his religious classes in the community's secondary school a top grade.

"To anyone who believes in the unconditional grace of God, grading pupils on religious instruction is a slap in the face," he said. But his church superiors said they would have to reconsider giving him a permanent appointment when his probation period ends.

United States

## Reagan holds out crumbs of comfort to national education establishment

by Clive Cookson

**WASHINGTON** The liberal education establishment, yearning for comfort after Mr Ronald Reagan's landslide election victory, found a crumb to the President-elect's first press conference.

Mr Reagan said he would appoint secretaries to run the two government departments he wants to abolish, energy and education.

The statement scotched speculation that he might show his determination to dismantle the Education Department, which Congress created last year at the request of President Carter, by failing to name a Cabinet-level secretary to head it.

In a further reassuring comment, Mr Reagan told the press conference: "When you talk about questioning whether a Cabinet-level department should exist as it is today, that does not mean that you are throwing out the legitimate functions which have always been performed by government and that should continue to be."

Leaders of national educational organizations seemed so stunned by the election results—perhaps more by the Republicans winning a majority of six in the Senate than by the size of the Reagan victory—that they fled little to say afterwards. They were careful not to say anything about Mr Reagan, because they hope to be able to influence his educational policy. That may be difficult, since very few members of the education establishment have bothered to cultivate contacts in the Reagan camp.

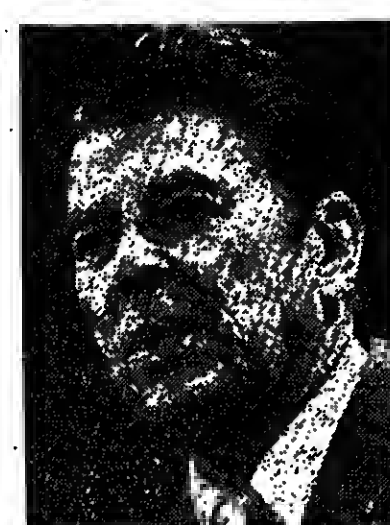
No one seemed at all sure what the new administration's educational priorities would be, or whom Mr Reagan might put in charge of education. Indeed the President-elect and his advisers probably do not know themselves, since education is far from the top of their list of policy concerns.

Mr Reagan's educational policy task force, chaired by Mr Glenn Campbell, director of the Hoover Institution at Stanford, is set to meet but it is not clear how influential it will be. According to one member, Mr Sheldon Steinbach of the American Council on Education, the task force concentrated on scaling down the Education Department, and on introducing tuition tax credits, which, parents could partially offset

college and private school fees). The Republican platform called for action on both issues.

The task force expressed enthusiasm for reducing federal regulation of education, said Mr Steinbach, the only representative of a national education group on the 14-member task force.

In elementary and secondary education deregulation will involve replacing the highly specific pro-



The President-elect will appoint someone to head threatened Education Department.

grams administered by the Education Department with block grants to states and school districts. Mr Reagan supports a general reduction in the role of the federal government (except the Defense Department) and a return of power to state and local governments, and to private individuals and organizations.

Mr Steinbach, a bright and energetic lawyer who may himself play an important role in the Reagan Administration, warned that the combination of a Republican President and Senate meant that "We're in for a period of real belt-tightening."

Several long-standing friends of education vetoed among the 12 Democratic Senators and about 30 members of the House of Representatives who lost their seats in Congress. Mr John Brademas, Democratic Whip in the House, and Mr Warren Magnuson, chairman of

the Senate Appropriations Committee, may be missed most. The House retains a Democratic majority, but the Republicans take control of the flow of legislation and budget appropriations through the Senate and all legislation (The new Congress is not assembled until January, but old one, including defeated members, returned to Washington week for a "lame duck" session to complete business left over before the election.)

On this basis of seniority, moderate Senator, Mr Mark Hatfield of Oregon, is in line to become chairman of the crucial appropriations committee, which will approve all federal expenditure. And the Senate's most liberal Republican, Mr Charles McClellan of Maryland, is expected to take over the subcommittee specifically with this education budget.

These assignments involve among the best that education could hope for in a Republican senate. But leadership of the Senate and human resources for education, which is responsible for authorizing education programs (as opposed to appropriating for them) is likely to go to a swing member, Mr Orrin Hatch of Utah.

Almost as worrying for education is the fact that the conservative Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina will take over the Judiciary Committee. Mr Edward Kennedy, like Mr Thurmond, is a strong supporter of prayer in schools and opponent of busing to achieve integration, and he will use his committee to promote his goals.

Voters in six states defeated cutting initiatives modelled on California's famous Proposition 13 in a seventh, Massachusetts, Proposition 21 passed by a majority.

It reduces local property taxes to 2.5 per cent of fair market value (hence the name) and that means local government revenue is cut by 10 per cent.

The potential for severe cuts in education is a mirror image of the success of the "pene" before next July. Massachusetts Education Commissioner Mr Gregory, who has been in the state since 1977, said that the impact will depend on the ability to raise local education taxes to half the local education which is not yet known.

## OVERSEAS NEWS

Sweden tackles youth unemployment. By Hilary Wilce

## Schools must help jobless

New legislation in Sweden has placed the responsibility for all under-18s—whether they are in school or not—firmly in the hands of the school system.

If a young person doesn't find a job, he shouldn't be considered unemployed, but he should be a pupil," Mrs Brit Mogård, Schools Minister, told *The TES*. "An education that fits his needs must be designed for him."

At the same time she pointed out that it was neither cheap nor effective to "make schools look like factories". The new measures are also intended to encourage more vocational training to take place within industry. Although the education system carries the overall responsibility, improved government grants are to be given to companies who offer their premises and training staff for vocational training schemes.

Youth unemployment in Sweden is running at about 5 per cent—low in comparison with other developed countries, but nevertheless virtually double the overall national unemployment rate and a cause for great concern.

The highly sophisticated economy offers few work opportunities for school leavers. Only about 10,000 leavers a year find jobs within their basic school education at 16.

More than 70 per cent of pupils go to upper secondary school immediately, and a further 15 per cent eventually take up one of the two-year, three- or four-year study programmes on offer.

Little of this high take-up rate is due to poor employment opportunities (with all the associated problems of discipline and

motivation in the upper secondary), but much is also to do with the wide range of training functions that the schools assume.

Hairdressers, mechanics, shop workers, and paper and pulp workers all do their basic training in school, cheek-by-jowl with sixth form-type pupils preparing to go on to university. Sixty per cent of courses offered by the upper secondary schools are vocational study programmes.

In addition, the vast expansion of adult education has meant that there is no longer anything extraordinary about returning to study after a shorter or longer gap, and the upper secondary environment is not too rule-bound or particularly ungenial for young adults.

But the rapid expansion of all kinds of education has led to problems, according to Mr Björn Grönqvist, education officer of SAT, the Swedish Employers' Confederation.

Five special pages on Swedish education begin on page 30. What is happening inside the country's radical university system? Why will all children have to learn to type? Is there a new kind of teacher for the new kind of school? Why do so many adults carry on learning? And does bilingual teaching really work?

"The very vastness of the educational activities has meant that we have found ourselves with a huge, autonomous, and partly artificial system within the community as a whole."

The earlier system of haphazard

job training, done almost entirely within the labour market, was unsatisfactory, he agrees. But so, too, was the initial solution. "We built lots of schools, put young people into them, then shut the doors, the windows, the cars. It was a solution typical of Sweden."

But the need to integrate schools with the society around them has been clearly perceived for many years now, and a series of efforts has been made to open both the doors and ears.

The latest reforms have laid down that vocational places in the upper secondary are to be increased. Five-week introductory courses at the beginning of the school year will encourage pupils to continue their studies, and one-year vocational courses are to be introduced, although other pre-job courses are to be cut. Access to the upper secondary school is to be made easier.

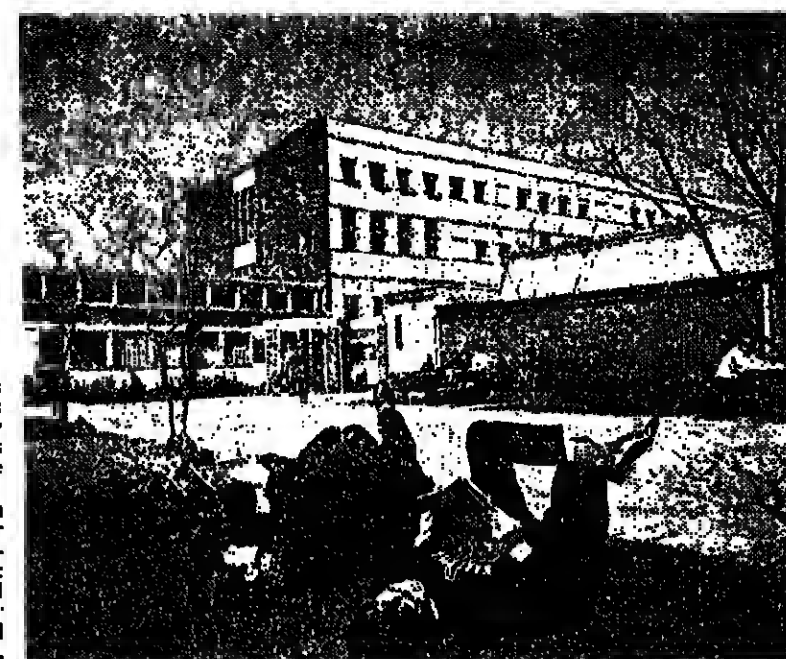
At the same time the job creation programme for unemployed youngsters is to be phased out, with considerable government savings. Last year the study grant paid to an upper secondary school pupil was approximately a tenth of the wage paid to a young person on relief work, of which the Government paid three quarters.

Younger pupils are in get at least six weeks' work experience during their time at comprehensive school, from 1982, in the form of both study visits and longer periods of practical experience. It is planned that this will be extended to 10 weeks eventually, and will encompass experience in three different sectors of working life: technology and manufacturing; commerce, communications, services; agriculture and forestry; and clothing and administration work, nursing and care, education and the arts.

Already this kind of pupils' work study is extensive. Companies and institutions in Sweden bear the brunt of about two million pupil-weeks per year, and since 1977 local committees of employer, union, school and employment representatives have extended to orchestrate cooperation between schools and the community. These SSA committees, as they are known, have full- or part-time secretaries.

In addition, most schools have a guidance counsellor, and appointments also exist for both teachers and heads to gain work experience for themselves.

Unfortunately it is easier to change structures than attitudes, and



Students at upper secondary school, where they study everything from hairdressing to advanced science. Work for unskilled youngsters is almost non-existent.

the gap between the world of school and work often remains wide. Few teachers, at present, know much about work other than their own, and some are sceptical of the actual educational value of the placements arranged.

OECD examines, whose report on Swedish education is to be published shortly, have sketched out a vision of what schools "might reach, a point where they so emphasize connections with work in society that they understand the importance of concept forming and cognitive development. They also express concern that too close a tie-up with the needs of the labour market could inhibit the development of critical and rigorous thinking about society."

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## LETTERS

## Evidence behind the screen

Sir—I should like to comment on the front page report by Bob Doe, "Early-warning screening tests a remanding flop" (The TES, October 31), which I think quite seriously misrepresents the purpose and method of the screening which was carried out in the West Riding in 1973, and does so in a sensational way. I think it may also present a biased interpretation of the evidence collected by Mr. Rennie in his follow-up research in Kirklees.

The whole concern of the West Riding screening procedure was to assist the schools in providing what ever help a child was found to need at the time, and not to make predictions about what the child would be like in the more distant future. Given the variability of child development and the circumstances which can affect it, no teacher or psychologist with any sense would expect that an assessment carried out at the age of seven years could give any firm prediction as to what the child would be like at 13-plus. But it is wholly reasonable to expect that children who are very much behind in their educational progress after two years in school, should be afforded some extra help or attention, and that the nature of this help should relate to the child's needs as indicated by the best available means of assessing them.

Mr. Rennie's research consisted in a follow-up of the age of 13 plus of a small group of the children who had been included in the 1973 West Riding screening assessments and who were attending schools in the Kirklees area. It was Mr. Rennie's intention to look at what had happened in these children, and he did so by giving them the Daniels and Dick Reading Experience Test, by noting how many of them had been referred to the Kirklees school psychological service since its inception in April 1974, and by using also how many of them had been placed in some form of special educational provision by

July 1979. These he described as his follow-up criteria. All this implied a presumption that the West Riding screening assessments were intended to predict such outcomes for the children, and his findings were therefore couched in terms of the extent to which such supposed predicted outcomes had or had not been realised, six years later. He then calculated error rates for the supposed predictions. It is these which your article picked out with a journalistic eye for the sensational, at the same time giving an erroneous twist to their interpretation.

It is, of course, of considerable interest that Mr. Rennie found that, for the group of children who were seven and assessed as part of the West Riding screening, a good proportion were reading above what he estimated to be the tenth percentile in the Daniels and Dick Test at 13 plus. This is what one would have hoped and expected would have happened, had they received appropriate teaching in their schools in the meantime, as very few of them were also found to be backward in other ways in the use of seven. It is also of interest that there were other children, not apparently having been indicated by the 1973 screening as being backward at that time, who were found to score below the tenth percentile on the test given at 13 plus. This merely indicates that a single screening of seven-plus can not be expected to indicate children who, for a variety of possible reasons, will subsequently fail to maintain their progress, that there is a need for continuous monitoring, as the Warnock Report recommended, and commonsense dictates. It is quite wrong to say that the West Riding screening should have predicted such circumstances, and misleading to criticise it for having failed to do what was never intended or considered possible.

Similar reservations can be expressed about the adequacy or relevance of Mr. Rennie's second criterion, namely how many of the children had been referred subsequently to the Kirklees school psychological service.

Bob Doe is completely wrong when he says that two out of every three of the children that the screening indicated would require help from the psychological service did not need it. The screening did not attempt to indicate which children would need to be referred to this service, and there was no specific recommendation to this effect. It was merely Mr. Rennie's assumption that the children assessed in the West Riding screening should have been referred to the Kirklees school psychological service, irrespective of whether their head teachers should consider this appropriate or necessary.

The article also states that, of the children judged at age seven to require special education, the screening proved to be wrong in 29 cases out of 30. This is a total misconception based on a misreading of Mr. Rennie's evidence. Very few indeed (0.6 per cent) of the children screened were recommended for consideration for special education. How many precisely were recommended for this, Mr. Rennie's Kirklees sample is not stated, but it could not have been more than a handful. What apparently Mr. Rennie did was to see how many of the children assessed in the screening had been placed in special education by the age of 13 plus. This is quite another matter; it could have been expected that very few of them would have been so placed, and it is nonsense to suggest that special education should have been expected for the majority of the children whose names were on the list of seven indicated to need such help.

DENNIS G. PICKLES,  
6 Elmct Grove,  
Leeds.

## The unacceptable face of political generalization?

Sir—Mrs Jill Robinson's article on private education of October 31 is an example of the dangerous political trick of generalizing from the particular. Her criticisms are applied to the whole private sector, her experience confined to one preparatory school. To unweave her arguments is rather like trying to unweave the rainbow. I will be accused of being "sexist" if I say that her article reminded me of a piece of crochet: a lot of holes tied together.

The basic premise beneath her railing exposition is that private schooling is socially undesirable; that we turn our charges into little "snobs". As a schoolmaster in a well-known northern independent grammar school I must point out that this is not typical. Indeed, from what I have seen in the private sector it seems to be the schools with a weak academic record which rely on snobbery.

As for "foreign holidays, two cars, and colour televisions", this is the kind of empty rhetoric we get from left-wing politicians. When I set the inevitable "My Summer Holiday" at the beginning of the year, fewer than half a dozen boys, out of a class of 22 had a continental holiday. The common vacations were camping, a cottage in Lakeland or the West Country, or joining a school party or the Scouts. There are plenty of cars which are well into the danger class in which boys are delivered to school, and most use public transport. I do not know how many colour televisions there are, but I think that on the whole, television occupies a less important place in their homes than perhaps in other sectors of the community. If not, watching Crossroads makes you a snob, and escape from snobbery is by having your brain rotted, then the thinking population of this country are all snobs.

It is true that our pupils have too much money to spend on sweats, crisps and other things which small boys like to destroy their teeth with. But I gather that this is a problem which has accompanied the general rise in incomes over 20 years and is hardly confined to private schools.

It must be remembered that most families find private school fees a major expense and a family sacrifice. Usually it means no continental holidays or the package tour to Spain which is more than a week in Blackpool at Wokes week—an old car, and in almost all

cases, both parents going out to work. I have known at least one instance where that was the mother was factory closing.

Without consciousness of the tions about lack of sensitivity on the death of a boy's dog, I am fortunate, children can be taught to be sensitive to the feelings of others.

I can only offer a submission to this aspect, but I least as valid as Mrs Robinson's generalization. As a teacher English may point out that because of the grounding in writing and reading skills we are able to offer more than teaching than would be possible in other schools.

A teenager's experience of what every generation has to learn of civilization is to be lay open the human mind's profound mysteries, joys and griefs. It is probably the most important factor, combined with a school "atmosphere" which on good manners, courtesy, honesty, which makes us better human beings.

Lots of state schools provide as valuable an education as many have given up. I am sure that a pupil who has listened to a Mozart symphony, has read and understood an Austen novel, will never be ill-mannered and just like John in Northanger Abbey. I am sure that if they do they will do it without the personal regret which makes them regret it. I like to think that they will do it in the first place, but the judgment which is made for a disinterestedness from a disinterestedness which is suggested in Mrs Robinson's article.

STEVE PATRICK,  
192 Tentercroft,  
Floro Street,  
Oldham.

## Other side of snobbery coin

Sir—Having started her teaching career with some three years in a boys' preparatory school, Jill Robinson confesses she found the academic standards unquestionably high and her two pupils "polite, hard-working and well-behaved" (The TES, October 31).

She will, however, not be sending her own son to an independent school—not on academic grounds, but on social ones. "This sounds suspiciously like an inverted form of the snobbery she imputes abounds in the preparatory school where she taught. A three-year-old teaching to a state primary school might demonstrate to Mrs Robinson that other 'unrefined' traits she claimed to encounter—stupidity, competitiveness, ignorance of the wider world, bullying, compulsory games and so on—can all flourish in less favoured climates.

What the preparatory schools do offer—uniform, a traditionally walled-off classroom and timetable, an element of selection, emphasis

on marks and positions, a degree of specialization on the subject to be very much more than a well-educated and articulate pupil. I think are appropriate at the time, but the casual and haphazard placement of emphasis on "happiness" and "enjoyment" at the expense of academic achievement may be wrong in going this far, but I am sure that a child taught in a state primary school, independent or otherwise, can see that a mixed environment might produce a different kind of preparatory school, namely all those boys that are too much for Mrs Robinson.

ROBERT SOLBE,  
Bickley,  
Bromley,  
Kent.

## Furthering the college cause

Sir—Jack Purvis (October 24 letters) gives an excellent example of successful cooperation between sixth forms and notes that the "dividends" from such a "cooperative" are striking. He would find the dividends even more striking if he followed the logic of the argument in its end.

resources in one institution is a far greater and even than is possible in even the most successful examples of cooperation. FRED JAMES,  
Chairman, College Panel,  
Tartford College, Somerset.

## LETTERS

## Bad language in the name of religion

At a time when the Church of England prepares to inflict upon its faithful a book of religious services which is so full of religious language, I observe that the Schools on the death of a boy's dog, I am fortunate, children can be taught to be sensitive to the feelings of others.

For example, the recently published *Prayers into Religion* holds up as an example of the post-communion prayer along with an inaccurate and uplifted version of the corresponding 1562 prayer and asks children: "Which do you find most (sic) helpful? Do you think it matters whether the language of the service is modern or not?"

Even without such resort to the compiler's licence to alter the language of the service, one can find many of Cranmer's words which would be like a jewel beside the cat-in-the-hat banality of its Series counterpart.

The present fight to save the Church's texts of Cranmer's King James is to a limited extent the Church's own affair. But we lay open the human mind's profound mysteries, joys and griefs. It is probably the most important factor, combined with a school "atmosphere" which on good manners, courtesy, honesty, which makes us better human beings.

## Software and hard facts

The article "Progress on the TES, October 31", prompts me to query whether the matter is really as simple as it is made to be in the heading paragraph for computing, which is "Can I suggest that all too often the words 'microcomputers' and 'microprocessors' are regarded as terms which they certainly are, but one of the increasingly diverse products of the microelectronics industry, and which range from traffic lights to automatic car production to automatic machine control, but that many pupils are in danger of leaving school with the impression that microelectronics is just a fancy word for computers."

Microelectronics is not a fancy word, hardly helps to itself a microelectronics project, and then explicitly talks about development, surely a word to make a clear distinction between the microelectronics in general, or microcomputers in particular.

JOHN LAMBERT,  
Chewton Road,  
Bath, Wiltshire.

## Different words separate values?

Mr. Brown (The TES, October 24) suggests that the Kinder word is to be destroyed, like a tickle, and that it should befall the same fate as the word "tick".

JOHN LAMBERT,  
Chewton Road,  
Bath, Wiltshire.

## Comprehensive activist

Sir—In my review of Robert Jenkins's *Tommy Benn: A Political Biography* (October 17) I wrote that "to say that Caroline Benn was 'one of the leading spirits of the comprehensive school movement' when she simply pushed it, a movement long established and under way by then, is again family myth making". Now I owe Mr. Jenkins an apology. When he actually wrote: "His wife, Caroline, who from then on would devote much of her life to education, became advocates of this merits of and 'used for a comprehensive system.' My quotation marks crept in carelessly and by error in what was meant as a paraphrase.

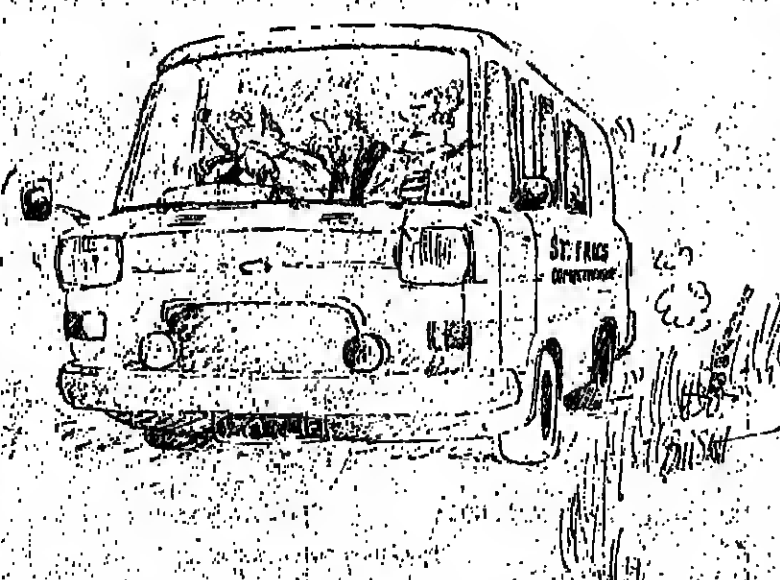
However, I think I owe Mrs. Benn a more profound apology. For she has, in fact been most active in promoting the cause of comprehensive education; far from that "she simply agreed with it" she was a founder member of the Comprehensive Schools Committee, a most active and effective lobby; has written widely on the question, notably in *Benn and Simon: Half-Way There* (1970), and has edited the *Journal of Comprehensive Education* for many years.

Mr. Jenkins does not claim that she was a pioneer, in my words may have implied, but that she was very active in the subsequent campaign for popularization and legislation.

I hope that you will print this apology for another magnificent criticism hits some leading figures in public life without making personal abuse by going for their names.

BERNARD CRICK,  
Rushmore College,  
7-15 Gresse Street,  
London W1.

Letters for publication should be as short as possible and should be written on one side of the paper only. The editor reserves the right to cut or omit them if necessary.



"Sir, Cassandra Poulley's been sick in the map stencil."

## Valuable voice of dissent

Sir—Merry Warnock's advice to Corry on Compulsory (October 24) is cheering to all of us who often feel we are getting nowhere when we protest against cuts, inequalities, and above all the obsession of so many politicians, writers and advisers with the education of a tiny minority.

You readers might like to know that we recently complained—in vain—to the Advertising Standards Authority, and Abbey Life, about the latter's full page advertisement in *Summit* this year to the Radio Times. It was not just the familiar insurance company's advocacy of its schemes whereby parents can cut the cost of private education. The headline was "Spot the kid from Bask Street" and the picture showed a selection of apparently identical school boys in school uniform, except that one had clearly been saved from his poor address by the assistance of the advertiser.

The accompanying text put across clearly the message that if you were going in such a school your chances of achieving any kind of success in life were slim indeed. You could be saved from your misfortune only by a fee-paying education which would

make you indistinguishable from your gentle, unviolent, successful fellows.

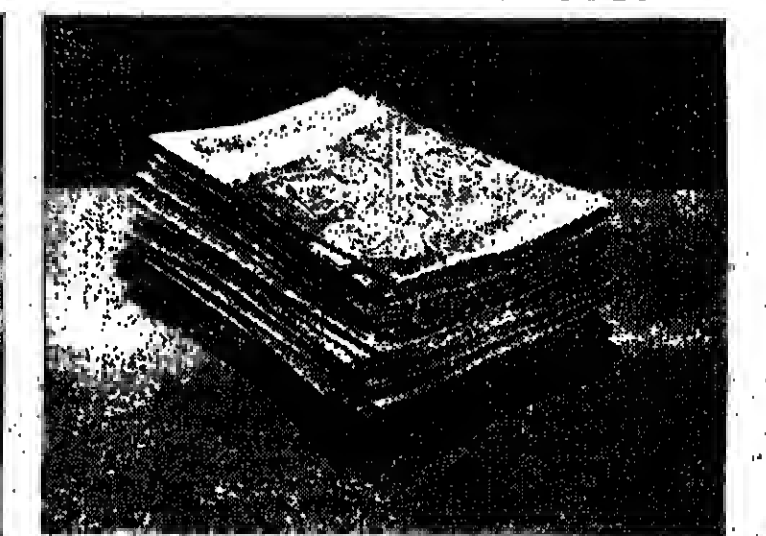
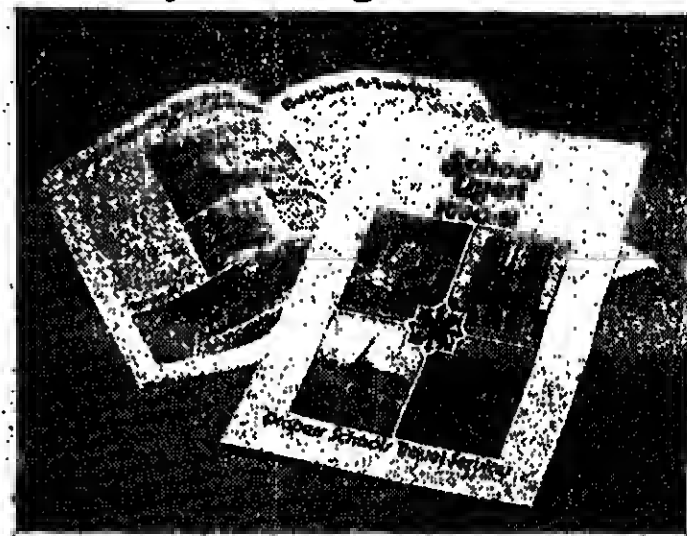
We claimed that this advertisement was insulting to the teachers, parents and children involved in our state schools, which cannot, it is implied, ever offer a better chance in life to those who have come from poor backgrounds. Even worse, we thought it offensive, education apart, to those children and their parents, since the clear inference was that they were not just lacking the ingredients for success but were also disorderly and violent.

After all, the street was not just called "Getworks Road" or "Bassamers" or "Quarry View" but "Bask Street". And we really were sensitive to reading violence into this choice of name.

Both the advertiser and the ASA seem to think so, for there seems complete non-comprehension of our point in their replies. Never mind, we shall carry on complaining. JOHN BALLS,  
Editor, Parents and Schools,  
49 Lauderdale Drive,  
Birmingham, Surrey.

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# Nursery talk - and how to stop it

'Language development' is a major aim of everyone working with young children. But a new study, published next Monday, shows just how difficult it is to get children talking. Jill Pinkerton reviews it.

In the past decade there has been an upsurge of research about pre-school education. But its relevance to teachers is not always apparent. Even when the findings and their implications are relevant, they are not usually communicated directly to teachers.

*Working with Under Fives*, by David Wood, Lynne McMahon and Yvonne Crausoun, is a welcome exception. From the start, the research was planned with the close involvement of teachers and playgroup leaders, and it was the practitioners who controlled the data that went into the study. The result is an excellent account of what actually happens in pre-school groups. It should help all of us who work with young children to think critically about our own methods.

The research (which formed part of Jerome Bruner's Oxford Pre-School Research Group) looked in particular at

how adults and children talk to each other and play together in nursery schools and playgroups. There is now wide agreement between teachers and researchers that sustained conversation between children and adults—closely tuned to the children's interests and developmental levels—is very important for their intellectual growth. This study, along with other contemporary research, examines how much of this kind of conversation actually takes place in pre-school groups.

Four nursery teachers and 20 playgroup leaders took part in the research. The method they evolved was that the practitioners should make their own half-hour tape recordings of a part of their day they considered "typical". The practitioners decided what bits of the tapes went into the study, and could interpose their comments, either while recording or afterwards. The data col-

lected was by no means objective, but had the strength of actively involving practitioners in the research process.

The recordings were analyzed in a number of ways. The interactions between adults and children were classified according to 26 kinds of things the adults might be doing, such as managing children's activities, giving instructions, or extending children's play. It turned out that there was a high incidence of what the authors called the "rapport" dimension, where the adult simply acknowledges or repeats what the child has said.

Child: "I'm going to play with cars."  
Adult: "Oh, lovely."  
Child: "And I... I'm going to do my painting."  
Adult: "Super."  
Also high up on the list was "management" talk, where the adults are organizing the children.  
Child: "Can I do it too?"

Adult: "Well, you can come along with me. Would you like to do some more painting?"  
Child: "No, you'll have to go to the other way. No, right round that way."

Although there was some evidence of asking for and giving information, there was little evidence of sustained conversation of an intellectually more demanding nature—how things work, why things happen, making predictions and so on.

Thus the kind of interaction considered so important for children's cognitive development was missing from these tapes. Nursery teachers might comment that this was a playgroup leaders' tape, not a teacher's. But other studies have shown similar patterns in the between-nursery teachers and children.

Understandably, the Oxford teachers and playgroup leaders were disturbed by the discrepancy between their ideals and their actual practice. An explanation may be lack of resources, or a lack of time, or a lack of training. But the authors may be obliged to ask: why should we be obliged to do this? Is it a managerial role, fending off demands and lacking time to be closely involved with one or two individuals?

Perhaps a more important factor is the deployment of adults. If they are to reduce the supervisory aspect of their job, they must take responsibility for management while the others work in greater depth with groups. Can space and equipment be arranged to minimize the need for control? These issues need thoughtful attention. But even if it is possible to spend more time on management, the quality of conversations will improve.

Holding stimulating conversations with young children is not easy—as the Oxford study points out. The analysis of conversations shows that the adults tended to dominate. Often they asked a series of questions, usually of a testing nature: "What colour is it? What shape is it? And what do you think they build with?"

Many practitioners were often surprised and upset when they heard their tapes. They had not realized the extent to which they over-ran the children, not giving them time to think and answer.

Adult: "Where do you think they build with?"  
Child: "They build them in trees."  
Adult: "Right at the tops of trees, don't they?"  
Child: "Yes, they build them in..."

Adult: "Well, that's a little sparrow."  
Child: "Yes, we..."  
Adult: "I've got a story about a sparrow who flew away from his mummy."

The study of children's conversations at home and at nursery school, directed by Diana Tizard, which I was involved in, found the same kind of adult dominance in conversations at school. But at home, the same children took a more active part in the talk.

Not all the practitioners in the study behaved in this dominant way. Some managed to elicit fuller and freer responses from the children. When they looked at what features of conversation seemed to stimulate a more active contribution from the children, they found that the adults who offered their own personal views and who did not bombard the children with questions.

Child: "There's a zoo in Bristol, isn't it?"  
Adult: "There is a zoo, yes."

"Oh, that's a nice apple. What colour is it?"  
"Red."

"Do you like apples?"

"Yes."

"Where do we get apples from?"

Child: "Have you been to it?"

Adult: "Once a long time ago, when I was a little girl, I went to it."

Child: "Chh..."

Adult: "Do you go to it sometimes when you go to your granny?"

Child: "Yes we might go... Daddy said we can go to the seaside or the... uhh... or the zoo... uhh... when we go there."

The power relation between adult and child seems to be important here. Where the adult behaves like a real person—offering genuine opinions and personal experience—adult and child are more equal contributors; the conversation tends to be more balanced, and the child gets the chance to think and formulate ideas and questions.

It also seemed that those practitioners who knew the children and the locality and who opened up conversations about the children's personal experience were more likely to have balanced discussions than those who were limited to the here-and-now of the play environment. This suggests that practitioners and children might have more fruitful conversations if they shared more experiences together, not simply at the college or junk shop, but going out together to shops,

parks and local places of interest to build up a shared past and potential future to draw on and discuss.

Having explored the issue of conversation in some depth, Wood, McMahon and Crausoun go on to examine styles of instructing children in particular tasks. From their observations they are able to suggest a number of practical guidelines for maintaining an interesting egalitarian relationship with children. They also look at the extent to which practitioners play with the children and find considerable variation between different adults.

Finally the authors turn to the question of change. As was mentioned earlier, many of the staff were distressed by their style of conversation. The second phase of the research invited them to make further tapes to see whether they could change this, and although changes did occur they were not necessarily for the better.

The amount of "rapport" comments like "super" declined, and conversations were longer. But several people simply asked more of the kind of questions that elicit limited responses from children. However, three out of the 16 practitioners who made second tapes asked fewer questions and talked more about themselves. Here the children's responses were fuller and included more ideas and questions.

In summary, *Working with Under Fives* is an excellent account of a fascinating piece of research. It is clearly written and brought alive by interspersing extracts from the tapes throughout the text. The authors manage to combine research data with thoughtful discussion, and while they are critical of various aspects of preschool practice, they offer some practical guidelines towards change. *Working with Under Fives* by David Wood, Lynne McMahon and Yvonne Crausoun. Grant McIntyre, £10.95 hardback and £4.95 paperback. To be published on Monday.

## features Involving parents

The final book to come out of Bruner's Oxford Preschool research group, *Parents and Preschool* by Teresa Smith, starts by trying to clarify what people mean when they talk of parent involvement. But the main aim of the research was to find out more about the process of parent involvement in preschools—what parents actually do, what roles they play, what staff and parents' attitudes are to parent involvement. The author studied 15 preschool groups in Oxfordshire (three nursery schools, four nursery classes and eight playgroups), some with low parent involvement and others high. Observations were made of what parents did when at preschool and staff and parents were interviewed.

Servicing activities, such as fundraising, or making and mending equipment, were the most usual form of help, followed by helping with day-to-day sessions. Few parents were involved in management. Playgroups were more likely than other groups to involve parents, but some of the nursery schools and classes had high levels of involvement while some playgroups did not involve parents much at all.

It all makes a valuable contribution to the study of parent involvement, as there are surprisingly few accounts of what actually happens at preschools. However, little time is spent on the numerous issues raised by her findings. The book would undoubtedly have made more lively and interesting reading had this been done.

One issue that weaves through the book is the role of parents in relation to professionals. It is often implied in discussions of parent involvement that parents have something to learn from helping at preschool groups, and indeed many parents in Smith's study said that they got new ideas from doing so. But do we really want parents to behave more like teachers and playgroup supervisors with their children?

Many practitioners are dissatisfied with their own behaviour when they look at themselves in some depth. They spend too much time managing the children and they tend to dominate in conversation. Until we know more about how parents interact with their own children at home it is dangerous to assume that parents can improve their practice as educators by helping at preschool and modelling their behaviour on professionals.

A further issue which received surprisingly little attention is that of management and decision-making. Although Smith explored how many parents were involved in management, she did not look in detail at what the role involved. Nor did she enquire how important decisions are made in the groups, such as how the daily routine is established, who decides about the purchase of new equipment, whether staff have meetings to discuss these things and if so, have they considered inviting parents' views?

Finally, there is little discussion of working parents. In Oxfordshire, the proportion of full-time working women is among the lowest in the country and this is therefore not a major consideration for Oxford preschool groups. But it is nevertheless an important issue in many urban areas. If parents cannot give time to help on a rota, how else might they be involved? Most parents would at least like the opportunity to discuss their own child's progress, and information about what he is doing and why.

These kind of issues require considerable thought and attention in any discussion of parent involvement and it is a pity that this book tied itself so closely to describing the one study.

*Parents and Preschool*, by Teresa Smith. Grant McIntyre, £9.95 hardback and £3.95 paperback. To be published on Monday.

Jill Pinkerton

Jill Pinkerton worked at the Thomas Coram Research Unit, and now teaches infants in Islington, London.



"And what did you do, did you play on the beach and dig sand—big holes?"  
"No, Daddy done some, but it was too wet, and it kept fallin' in but... not strong enough... kept fallin' in 'cause it was wet."  
"Oh, I see."  
"We're going on the big wheel and we won't be... it keeps birlin' and goes up and down. And when you stay up as well as somebody wants to go... uhhm... if somebody wants to get off we would be at the top."

Jill Pinkerton





lowgiver", almost certainly never  
 existed "as a real person; he is  
 product of the Greek propensity to  
 explain history in personal terms.  
 But, though exploded the popular  
 notion of Sparta will, I suspect  
 parallel and prove, at this late date  
 wellnigh impossible to disprove.







## Anthony Masters



Scene (If young and unaccompanied, please print)

NAME (SURNAME)

SCHOOL

ADDRESS

Tel. POST CODE



## resources

Electric Company; Lord Scanlon, Chairman,  
Engineering Industry Training Board;  
Dr. Elizabeth Laverick, Deputy Secretary,  
Institution of Electrical Engineers; Joseph Moon,  
Director, Engineering Industry Training Board;  
Hugh Stephenson, Editor, Times Business News;  
Edward Townsend, Industrial Writer,  
Times Business News.

فلا بد من



# media Medium rare

Christopher Griffin-Beale on 'Viewpoint 2'

RTV  
Viewpoint 2 in The English Programme  
Thames  
Wednesdays, November 12-December 3, 11.34-11.57  
Fridays, November 14-December 3, 09.30-09.55.

The arrival of a completely new unit of four Viewpoint programmes, under the title Viewpoint 2, within Thames' "English Programme" series, is a major event. It is five years since the original four-part Viewpoint series received its first—and only—transmission for schools. And of the multitude of television programmes about the media since then, not one has displayed as sharp a focus as any programme—except the exception of Westward's adult education series The Television Programme—deployed as much verve and imaginative surgery in using the medium's own techniques.

Viewpoint came under fire for its direct challenge to the IBA Act's requirements on impartiality and for its analyses of media control and ownership. Many teachers, however, have recognised the programme's position, recognised how the series' vitality—and its refusal to opt for fence-sitting blindness—has won interest and a response from their classes. Four of the programmes were selected, revised and incorporated in Thames' "English Programme" together with television's perennially deficient for impartiality, a balancing studio discussion.

This new unit of four programmes, Viewpoint 2, follows in the same tradition. Directed by Alan Brown, the series concentrates on how certain social groups and events are represented in the media: young men and women; people of different ethnic backgrounds; workers, extending industrial conflict with their employer; and people who become dependent on the welfare state.

The first programme, for instance, argues that media coverage of young people is obsessed with young men's violence and young girls' sexuality. The second programme illustrates how media material, particularly jokes, reinforces traditional white assumptions about other races. While Douglas Lowndes spoke direct to editors, enthusiastically promoting his viewpoint, Professor Stuart Hall, the adviser and presenter of this new series, remains an off-screen narrator whose calm measured delivery is far removed from any media stereotype of a radical polemicist. We hear from a number of the subjects of media coverage themselves, each pro-

coverage themselves, and each pro-  
"Viewpoint 2" from various press  
and television executives. The in-  
tention to disagree and challenge  
these programmes is repeated,  
in Andrew Bethell's accompanying  
workbook.

The first two programmes wield  
a crisply edited barrage of still  
images, newspaper headlines,  
songs, magazine articles and film  
clips to illustrate Hall's argument,  
while clever animations encapsulate  
particular points. In the first pro-  
gramme, some bizarre focus-point  
added to a magazine cover photo  
of Marilyn Monroe turns her into  
a punkette like Siouxsie or one of  
her banishes, while a further dis-  
cussive transforms the face further  
into Debby Harry (Blondie), the  
more acceptable—and traditional  
face of punk, indicating how some  
of the more threatening sub-cultural  
revolts are muted.

And in the programme on race,  
the animation of white man facing  
black man, with superimpositions of  
the sequence of historical images  
inside their heads, conveyed the  
programme's major argument: that  
in any encounter between black and  
white, the participants' relationship  
is coloured by the participants' very  
different set of historical  
assumptions about the other race,  
and media stereotypes and racist  
jokes ("Only a joke as the stand-  
ard excuse is it") reinforce the  
resulting prejudices.

The first programme looks also  
at the media messages directed to  
young people themselves in pop  
songs, comics and teenage magazines.  
The confusions they can breed in  
young people are subtly suggested  
by a dramatized scene of an en-  
counter of the bus stop. Young man  
—imbued with assumptions of male  
machismo—accosts young girl, her  
head filled with notions of romantic  
love and the difficulty of commit-  
ment. The result is that the boy  
who reacts sensitively, shuffling  
off to seek to escape, rebuffed by the  
harshness of the girl's response.  
It is an ambiguous, understated  
little scene, which could generate  
hours of argument.

But how far is media coverage  
reflecting psychological, political  
and social attitudes that—however  
undesirable—do actually exist?  
There may be a case for trying to  
break out of the "endless circle",  
as it is called in the notes, whereby  
media messages reflect and rein-  
force prejudices, keep them alive  
to be reflected by the media in the  
future. However, the logic of the  
programme's argument leads beyond  
the media's own culpability to the  
deeper roots of the attitudes the  
media is presenting. And while  
Viewpoint 2 may have advisedly  
avoided the sensitive matters of  
media control, it points towards  
political and social issues outside  
the narrower confines of media  
control, if teachers and pupils want  
to pursue them.



Spectrum, a new science related programme for eight to eleven-year-olds begins this Friday at 4.45. Above, presenters Mike Sheridan and Linda Kennedy talk with Superbow.

## Human concerns

Francesca Greenoak reviews 'Starting Science'

ETV  
Starting Science  
ATV  
Thursdays, 11.10-11.25  
Tuesdays, 11.22-11.37.

These fourteen thematically based  
programmes aim to introduce  
science to younger children in such  
a way that scientific enquiries "fall  
naturally out of a general study"  
and are not seen as something  
"special and apart from the rest of  
the curriculum".

This turns out to be an over-  
modest objective, for what the  
series also gives us is a sensible and  
convincing model of how to pursue  
these scientific enquiries. The out-  
standing part of each programme  
shows children working in the best  
tradition of scientific method, with  
experimentation, controls and care-  
ful recording.

So far we have seen them test-  
ing strength and stress by design-  
ing and making paper bags with  
different kinds of papers and glue,  
examining pecking and cracking in  
a variety of materials; and encod-  
ing and decoding through drum-  
beats, electric circuits and flagging.  
The technical and human problems  
which the children encounter in  
these sequences are clearly as  
educational as the successes.

With the third in the series, an  
excellent survey of communication,  
the programme seems to have found  
its feet. It makes its points with a  
confidence, pace and clarity some-  
times lacking before, and the two  
likeable presenters handle the show  
with Tomorrow's World style and  
flair. The weakest point of each  
programme is a kind of Crocker-  
jack sketch including a poster so

clumsily built in that the point is  
mainly lost.  
Television has never been good  
at this sort of poster drama, or  
generally speaking, with poetry. The  
two poems in this series, though  
well chosen and nicely read, lost  
their meaning in the ephemeral,  
single performance.

On the whole, however, Starting  
Science uses television to good  
effect: presenting a succession of  
images with an impact and authen-  
ticity for beyond classroom  
resources.

Many of the sequences are with-  
out commentary, and very striking.  
There were impressive robot-  
machine sequences in programme  
three, but the original aims of the  
series were completely realized: to  
show how everyday life is full of  
opportunities for scientific enquiry.

However, having taken the science  
from everyday life to show that it  
is not something special, should one  
not also consider science within  
everyday life? Scientific objectivity  
and humanity lie perilously close  
to one another.

People suffering from flood  
and earthquake are simply out of the  
same order of catastrophe as the  
pleased collapse of a chimney.  
There is marvellous precision in  
the design of robot-machines, yet during  
the welding and paint-spraying film  
"Contains a wide range of styles  
speech and presentation to be  
used in 14-year-olds' science and  
writing" (from the programme's  
notes).

Two programmes short of  
writing of the Gospels of Mark  
and Luke, it is 12 years  
to discover why some of the  
series are alike.

## Briefings

Radio and tv

OU and general interest

Multi-Racial Britain Lectures (M.R.B.)  
Day, 14.30 (BBC2)

Five talks explore different  
aspects of race relations. Com-  
mentators are Professor John Rex and  
Alan Little, Stuart Hall, Bernard  
Parekhi and Bishop Trevor Huddleston.  
Education Matters (Monday, 11.30  
BBC2)

Key issues discussed by educa-  
tionists. Richard Hogg  
talks to Adam Hopkins about con-  
tinuing education.  
Whistle Blowers (Tuesday, 11.30  
BBC2)

An examination of the work of  
investigative journalists in tele-  
vision.

For schools

A Good Job With Prospects (Mon-  
day, 9.00, Friday, 14.35 (BBC1))

Fifteen to 18-year-olds learn the  
job opportunities in the first pro-  
gramme.

Biology (Monday, 9.30 (BBC1))  
What do people behave the way  
they do? How far can the study  
of birds and chimpanzees help us  
understand human behaviour?

## Boys' games

Jane Kowalska

Recently the National Union of  
Teachers published a study which  
showed how poorly women are  
represented in senior teaching posts.  
This is particularly true in primary  
schools, where there are few such  
posts.

It often argued that women  
are, as a whole, less ambitious  
than men, and do not seek pro-  
fessional or extra responsibility. From  
my own experience, many women  
teachers are very keen to gain pro-  
fessional status as much as their male  
colleagues. Generally, those women  
who are already in senior posts are  
more likely to be so.

Providing material for  
examination oral work, the  
sections of this week's programme  
revolve around the language and  
style of shopping, and talking  
back (Friday, 10.15 (TV)).

What was it like to be a  
woman in the 19th century? The  
fourteen study archive film  
shows the comments of women  
working in the 19th century.  
Listening and Writing (Friday, 10.15  
TV).

"Rattus Rex" is an ex-  
cellent story about a race of giant  
rats which terrorizes Victorian  
England. It contains a wide range of styles  
speech and presentation to be  
used in 14-year-olds' science and  
writing (from the programme's  
notes).

Two programmes short of  
writing of the Gospels of Mark  
and Luke, it is 12 years  
to discover why some of the  
series are alike.

## Mini-detention centres?

Andrew Redpath  
Neville Ackroyd

From being once popular and  
praiseworthy, special units have  
become the target for sweeping and  
often ill-founded criticism. "Sancti-  
fied" have made way for "sin  
bin", and in spite of the low pupil-  
teacher ratio, special units are  
deemed to provide an inferior edu-  
cation.

It has also been suggested that  
special units are being trampled  
underfoot as schools fill up these  
"sin bins" with the nearest disrup-  
tive in sight of the head's office.

In short, units are no longer seen  
as being places with dedicated  
staff, but mini-detention centres  
where kids are "dumped" in times

of stress and then forgotten about.  
Withdrawal is not regarded as an  
effective way to tackle the pupil's  
problem, but an easy answer to the  
school's failure to accommodate  
him/her in normal lessons.

Our unit was set up in early 1977  
with generous financial assistance  
from the Urban Aid Programme  
and the L.O. Purpose-built and  
sited within the school grounds, it  
is a separate building with easy  
access to main school facilities. Hav-  
ing had considerable experience of  
teaching difficult children of  
secondary age, we were both  
appointed specifically to establish  
and staff the unit from its inception.

The accommodation comprises  
one general classroom, an art/craft  
workshop, kitchen/dining area, and  
staff office. We are able to offer  
broad curriculum, ranging from art  
and craft through to maths, English  
and social studies often up to  
examination level. Teachers from  
the main school have provided  
assistance and visited the unit to  
teach subjects not normally avail-  
able.

The number of pupils on roll

varies, but it is usually no more  
than 16 at any one time. Half  
attend school on a part-time basis.  
Of those who are full-time on the  
unit's register most are confirmed  
trouble. Although they have no  
wish to rejoin the main school, often  
their attendance has improved  
remarkably since transfer to the  
unit.

The long-term stay pupil is the  
exception rather than the rule.  
There is a deliberate avoidance of  
the "sin bin" principle—pupils in  
the fifth year are rarely considered,  
and those awaiting transfer are  
only a small proportion of our total  
number.

In each case of referral to the  
unit, there is discussion between  
pastoral staff, the head, parents,  
and unit staff before a final deci-  
sion is made. Parents are always  
consulted, and cooperation and in-  
volvement invited. Unfortunately,  
not all parents are sufficiently inter-  
ested in their child's progress to  
make contact and consultation  
meaningful.

Once the pupil is in the unit, a  
weekly report (with a daily record  
of performance) is sent home to  
parents.



As pupils are fed back to  
school, academic progress and  
behaviour are carefully monitored.

Our policies have been arrived at  
by discussion and consultation  
between us, the head, deputies and  
pastoral staff of the school, in the  
light of three and a half years  
experience. There have been insul-

able referrals and conflicting  
interests; however, we can confi-  
dently state that our unit is a far  
cry from a "sin bin".

If the unit did not exist it would  
probably mean that these pupils  
benefiting from its provision would  
be spending time sent out of  
lessons, suffer repeated suspensions,  
or possibly face exclusion. It would  
be fanciful to imagine that abandon-  
ing special unit provision could in  
some way eliminate the problem of  
disruptive behaviour in schools, or  
that school would necessarily pro-  
vide an effective alternative strategy  
for accommodating pupils present-  
ing behavioural problems.

There are units other than our  
own demonstrating that with  
thoughtful planning and organiza-  
tion, and the careful selection of  
pupils, special units can play their  
part in helping both truant and dis-  
ruptive pupils at a time when few  
other options seem open.

Andrew Redpath and Neville Ackroyd  
teach in the Special Studies Unit,  
Willesden High School, London  
Borough of Brent.

## Bright behaviour

Trevor Kerry

The DES Teacher Education Project  
in the universities of Nottingham,  
Exeter and Leicester has been look-  
ing at ways in which young teachers  
can be helped to cope more effec-  
tively with class management and  
discipline problems. Part of the  
work involved on investigation into  
how, when and why bright pupils  
misbehave in class.

We mailed a questionnaire to 138  
primary and secondary teachers, and  
received exactly 100 responses. The  
questionnaire was designed to dis-  
cover whether bright pupils misbe-  
haved more or less than other  
pupils; the kinds of management  
incidents teachers had experienced  
with bright pupils; the characteris-  
tics of those incidents which marked  
out bright pupils as "trouble"; and  
young teachers' and their advice  
experienced teachers would give to  
young teachers and probationers to  
help them handle this group of  
children.

Most teachers (62 per cent) found  
bright pupils less disruptive than  
others, and only 11 per cent found  
them more disruptive. In fact, less  
than half (46 per cent) of our  
respondents could remember a  
specific disruptive incident of a  
management or behavioural nature  
brought about by a bright pupil.

The incidents which could be  
grouped into about six main kinds.  
Commonest was the sort which  
involved lack of interest in work  
which the pupil saw as "too easy"  
or "boring". These incidents were  
evidenced in apparent laziness by  
child, failure to settle down to work  
in extreme cases, by a direct  
challenge to the teacher—"Do we  
have to read this boring book,  
Miss?"

Next in frequency was the situa-  
tion where a single bright pupil  
tended to take over a class by domi-  
nating teacher time through genuine  
interest in the subject, or by chal-  
lenging the teacher or other pupils.  
Symptomatic of this problem were  
bright pupils who were described  
as talking too much or becoming  
classroom bores.

Four other problems were each  
named by four respondents. Bright  
pupils finish work quickly. Front  
of teacher's point of view this may  
be a management issue (the child  
is now unoccupied) even though it  
shows the virtue of keenness.

But bright pupils who are keen  
may be attracted by peers or even  
adults; younger ones may throw  
temper tantrums when they feel  
themselves unjustly penalized or  
unable to get work right. Bright  
youngsters, like others, will indulge  
in horseplay from time to time.  
More peripheral incidents men-  
tioned included mimicking the  
teacher, making "clever" or  
praiseworthy comments, shouting out  
answers, truancy, telling lies and  
attention-seeking.

One might expect bright pupils  
to be more inventive in disruption  
than others, and part of the ques-  
tionnaire was designed to establish  
whether this was so. Though in  
general teachers felt that bright  
pupils did not use their creative  
talents in this way, our respondents  
did note one or two events of this  
kind.

Of these, the case of the ex-  
perienced English teacher who  
passed a whole lesson somewhat  
distracted from her teaching pur-  
pose is typical. She "knew" in-  
stinctively that something was  
wrong, but couldn't discover any  
disruptive behaviour or poor work.  
After half an hour the penny sud-  
denly dropped: four bright pupils  
who sat together near the front all  
normally wore glasses. Today, too,  
they were wearing glasses—each  
other's!

Experienced teachers were full of  
good advice on how to handle  
bright pupils in order to avoid  
this kind of situation.

Next in frequency was the situa-

## Sixth-form comparisons

Dorothy Davis

Arguments have put for every  
comprehensive school having to  
offer sixth form, however small, and  
others have argued that it is not  
worth the extra cost. On the one  
hand, a sixth form for every  
comprehensive school, is a novelty  
for the sixth form colleges.

The first remarkable effect of  
the examination courses is that the  
percentage of 16-year-olds staying on  
has doubled in five years from 17  
per cent to 34 per cent. Equally  
remarkable is that, given the choice,  
students have voted with their feet  
for the sixth form colleges.

The colleges are overwhelmed  
with applications, and the sixth forms  
of 11-18 schools have actually  
declined, year by year. No genuine  
applicant has been turned away  
anywhere; all six institutions have  
been keen to recruit.

The sixth form colleges, all  
ex-grammar, have shown a marginal  
decline in the step-on rate of their  
own pupils, but have attracted not  
only growing numbers, but a grow-  
ing share of the choices of 16-year-  
old secondary modern leavers.

The total age group of 16 reached  
its peak in Leicester this year. The  
numbers transferring from 11 to 16  
schools into all types of sixth form  
has doubled in five years (537 to  
1,074), but among those the num-  
bers entering 11 to 18 sixth forms  
has actually fallen (119 to 89). This  
has actually fallen (119 to 89). This  
has actually fallen (119 to 89).

In the event, current stay-on rates  
have for surpassed these of the

## Mr and Mrs Average and family

Anthony Glees discusses 'The John Smith Show'

Continuing Education  
The John Smith Show  
Thames TV  
Tuesdays, 7.00 pm.

The John Smith Show is not only  
the TV, but also good television.  
About three million people watched  
programme one, which must make  
it about the first TV series to go  
out at peak time and gain the sort  
of audience normally associated  
with lighter matters.

The John Smith Show is about  
us. The idea is to create an idyllic  
picture of the average British  
family, or families—four variations  
are portrayed in the show. They  
were chosen from the 30,000 people  
called John Smith in the United  
Kingdom (as were the studio  
audience) and although this  
might seem like a gimmick, it is the  
sort of innovation that encourages  
the hesitant viewer.

Producer Mary McAnally claims  
her series is meant mainly to satisfy  
the "nosey parker" in us, and that  
what we make of the information  
is up to us. In fact, she is creating  
an accurate social record, backing  
up what we see with the reasons for  
it.

For unlike that other nosey  
parker's show, The Family, which  
BBC 1 screened some years ago, we  
are given the statistical proof that  
what the four families represent is  
a true picture of our own lives.

In programme one we meet the  
families and learn that all of them  
have two children. This might not  
seem remarkable, yet less than 100  
years ago the average family had six  
children. Then we learn about the  
jobs they do, and the social class  
they belong to.

It is revealing to see that  
apart from the wife of the  
richest Smith (a company solicitor),  
all the Mrs Smiths go out to work.  
Too. This corresponds to the national  
picture, where three out of four  
women now work (a great increase  
over the past two decades) and they  
work for money rather than enjoy-  
ment.

Programme two discusses what the

Leicester's Plan schools. Even  
in the difficult years of transition,  
the sixth form colleges have proved  
overwhelmingly successful, attract-  
ing high proportions of young  
people of all abilities, fleeing self-  
factory job placements for "new  
sixth formers", and (using more  
conventional criteria) maintaining  
Oxbridge entrances for "high-  
fliers", university places for for-  
mer secondary modern pupils, and  
good examination results generally.

Regrettably, the local authority's  
grudging response—in the teeth of  
McAnally's remarks in spite of the  
local evidence—is deliberately to  
restrict numbers in sixth form col-  
leges, to create more all-through  
schools, and to boost numbers in  
their small sixth forms by with-  
drawing GCE options in colleges of  
further education.

The spell of the "ottered" sixth  
form, though plainly shattered  
among young people, is still strong  
upon this older generation.

Dorothy Davis is a member of the  
Leicestershire education committee.

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# Sweden

## What happens now the spending has to stop?

by Hilary Wilce

Sweden has restructured its education system more thoroughly and systematically than any other Western country. It has thought long and hard about its educational ideal, and has sunk colossal amounts of money into educational change.

In aiming high and stopping with both assurance and a clearly defined path towards social equality and participation, it has attracted a great deal of admiration, envy and criticism.

But this era of innovation is now drawing to a close.

The school system, from seven to 19, is unified, and higher education, which was radically restructured in 1977, is also now unified and single system, and widely accessible.

Changes in teacher training are coming, but all other future reforms are likely to be only minor tinkering with the existing system.

To some extent this is because the groundwork is done, but a changing political and economic climate also militates against further sweeping reforms.

The political tranquillity under which the past changes were made no longer exists. Forty four years of Social Democrat rule came to an end in 1976. Since then there have been two coalition governments and a minority Liberal-Centre government.

The present Liberal-Centre-Conservative coalition holds power by just one vote and had to weather Sweden's first-ever no confidence

motion earlier this year.

This is not to say that Swedish politics are now disturbed by anything as violent as heated clashes of ideology; discussions and compromise are still the order of the day. But a new instability has been introduced, and there is a growing sense that individual rights must have as much attention as broad social targets.

Even more unstable are Sweden's traditionally tranquil labour relations. Shaking economic growth has meant new union militancy and the industrial disruptions of last May seem set to blow up again in the not-too-distant future.

Meanwhile a burgeoning foreign debt and inflation of around 10 per cent have put the brake on public spending. The Government recently announced a 6.3b kronor (€630m) package of savings, with education taking a 3 per cent cut on next year's budget.

In all, education cuts will total about 650m kronor (€65m), and a similar order of cuts is expected over the following few years, but those in charge of Sweden's education are putting a brave face on this first 'welding of the knife'.

Schools Minister, Mrs Brita Mogård, an independent-minded Conservative, wonders whether the previous ready availability of funds has created a system which underuses its resources and treats its pupils as objects.

After all, why should everything be bought? I think children have had too little responsibility in

schools. Perhaps they should clean up after themselves, for example, and learn to look after their environment.

Her thoughts are echoed by Ms Birgitta Ullstam, head of the National Board of Education, who hopes that the drying up of resources might prompt new and imaginative ways of tackling problems. "We have to learn a new lesson about money. We have been used to it coming from the top, but it has not always been clear that what the new money has been used for has made things better."

Such sentiments might be simply the pragmatism of those who have the job of lightening the purse strings, but they illud their cuts further down the line.

The head of a nursery school in a poor district of Stockholm complains with feeling about her lavish equipment: "The children get so easily bored. They don't learn how to play by themselves, how to make up games."

Similar complaints can be heard about older pupils. There is much talk (although less evidence) of violence and vandalism, of the alienation of young people and their boredom with study.

To a great extent this is the result of a lengthy education. Opportunities for manual young workers are few, and nearly 90 per cent of pupils stay at school till they are 18 or 19.

But it is widely acknowledged in Sweden that much more needs to be done in schools to draw out indi-

vidual potential, to encourage imaginative teaching, and to make the system more responsive to changing needs.

In spite of the radical changes in educational structures over the last decades, classrooms have altered rather less and classes in Swedish schools are often teacher-dominated, with pupils sitting in straight lines, following a rigidly prescribed curriculum.

There are moves afoot to make the curriculum more flexible, to decentralize decision-making and to encourage more experimental class work, but such things do not come easily in a country where formal centralized planning is the normal channel of change.

But as examiners for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development have noted, in a report on Swedish education to be published shortly, "The Swedish experience, in fact, points to the difficulty of achieving change at the individual pupil, teacher and parent level by changes in structure, new material, how resolutely attempted."

Nowhere is this more clearly illustrated than in the disappointing results of the energetic drive towards equality, which show that pupils from lower class backgrounds continue to opt for lower educational targets, and that, despite all encouragement to the contrary, boys continue to choose to study technology while girls mainly opt for home economics.

However, attitudes inevitably change more slowly than structures, and Sweden's educational achievements over the past few decades have been impressive.

Criticism within the country centre only on specific issues, such as the lack of pre-school provision, the grading of comprehensive schools-leaving pupils, or the situation of student places within a higher education system.

There are no calls for a return to a selective school system, and the ease with which students can now transfer from one study and back again is the envy of many other countries.

The important thing is that the national framework to ensure that each and every pupil and student gain the best education in a system can possibly provide, and the aims of social equality are not promoted at the expense of the development of individual potential.

In many ways this presents a harder challenge to Sweden than the reforms of the past.

It demands confidence in individual schools and teachers, and a willingness to allow change to develop at grassroots level. It requires listening more closely to the needs of these to education and to the multiple approaches, and that, in words of the OECD examiners, "good things do not necessarily emerge from good plans and good intentions alone."

## Teacher training: yet to line up with school reform

by Leon Boucher

One of the problems with the way in which Sweden has undertaken major educational reforms is the inordinate length of time which elapses between the setting up of a commission of inquiry and the final parliamentary proposition to effect the agreed proposals.

In the case of the reform of teacher education, the Commission of Inquiry (KUT) was set up in 1974. It reported at the end of 1976; comments on it were received by early 1980; and the proposition will not be presented until the spring of 1981.

In these intervening seven years the climate of opinion has changed. Initially there was a great deal of emphasis on the role of the teacher and his responsibility for the care of the pupils, reflected in the report's title *Teachers for a school in transition*. Now the emphasis has shifted, and there is greater concern for the level of knowledge of the teacher and his ability to communicate this to his charges.

Despite the long delay, however, there is a large measure of agreement on teacher reform. All agree to accept that it is necessary that there should be, as far as possible, a course of training for those who teach in the comprehensive school with a substantial common element of pedagogy, methodology, practice and study of at least the basic skills of mother tongue and mathematics. This should total two years of the proposed three and a half-year initial course.

It is also considered generally desirable that teachers should be able to teach across different age ranges instead of the present arrangement whereby one category of teacher is qualified to teach only seven to 10-year-olds, another the 10-13-year-olds, and a third the 13-16-year-olds.

If it is considered particularly desirable to have such a sharp change, as at present, from a largely class teacher situation to a

totally subject teacher situation with each class suddenly seeing 12 of 13 different teachers, and each teacher seeing up to 200 pupils.

Since the expansion of the school system, it is now possible to recruit to teacher education candidates of high intellectual quality, and as the demand for teachers has decreased in recent years, teaching has become one of the most selective careers in higher education, requiring top grades for most subjects at school. The raw material for training is therefore excellent.

But there are considerable differences of opinion as to the proposals put forward. Subject teachers feel that the proposed year and a half for subject specialization beyond the acquisition of basic teaching skills is not enough.

While they think it is good to increase the degree of subject specialization for teachers of younger children, they argue that a year and a half is far too little for the level of knowledge necessary for teaching children aged 13 and upwards.

This is probably true, or present, subject teachers study two or three subjects for three years, followed by a year of professional training. The proposed reform would reduce this to one and a half years in the initial stages. There is too considerable a gap between the proposed level of the link of subject teacher competence to teach from the 13-16 and the 16-19 stage.

Balancing the debate there is also the problem, less readily discussed in the context of teacher education, but undoubtedly present, of falling rolls. Pupil numbers will drop by 10 per cent in the basic school in Sweden in the first half of the 1980s and this in a country where the overall teacher/pupil ratio is already around 10:1. Class sizes are already 20-plus in the seven to 10, and 10-13 age groups, and 25-plus in the 13 and upwards groups, rather than the legal limits of 25 for seven-10-year-olds and 30 for older pupils.

Clearly, there is a very real risk



Pupil numbers will drop by 10 per cent in the first half of the 1980s.

of teacher unemployment. Reform proposals which would make teachers more able to teach at various stages and over a wider range of subjects would clearly reduce both the need for certain specialisms and the total numbers needed to man the education services.

What, then, is likely to be the result of the Government proposal? One possibility is to delay the teacher reform entirely and make it possible for teachers to be employed at different age levels simply by altering the rules governing their appointments. Yet do not have to change the programme of teacher education to make it possible for class teachers to teach above the age of 12 or specialists in each below 12. England is a classic example of this. But this would involve detailed negotiation with teacher unions.

A second possibility is that the full proposal will be delayed on the grounds of the cost of implementing it, especially at a time when Sweden is undergoing a period of economic restraint.

The proposed increase of the initial period of training for the teachers to seven years, by one year, and the teaching of 10-13-year-olds by half a year, is only

another. If the claim that the amount of time available for subject study is too little were to be met by including, in the initial period of training, that half-year's course which the teacher reform proposal has suggested should be a requirement every 10 years for teachers in service, this would further add to the cost of the teacher education proposals. Money, therefore, rather than educational principle may be a deciding factor.

Another alternative would be to accept in general terms the idea of teachers being trained broadly to teach in the basic school but to recognize that the basic school is still a school, and that it is possible for class teachers to teach above the age of 12 or specialists in each below 12.

Nobody has suggested that there could be one category of teacher really appropriately qualified to teach at all levels over such a wide age span. On the other hand, as the retiring principal of the largest teacher high school in the country in Stockholm has hinted, there may well be justification in providing two categories of teachers, one in the age of about 10 and one from about the age of 10 onwards. The first could be competent to teach over a broad range of experience, the other to teach perhaps

basic skills plus one or two subjects. Finally, if the existing proposals were to be implemented, it is likely that the half-year course, points, suggested for teacher training would, in fact, be included as an element in the basic course to make it a four-year programme for all. If only to ensure that adequate time was made available for subject study.

At the end of the day, the issue is whether Sweden will give the benefit of a major teacher reform to parallel the reforms of the past 30 years in process for the rest of the country. There remains among teachers and subject specialists a feeling that the old element of selective grammar school education is all there ought to be, and that teachers trained without special skills in a system which longer exists and nobody believes in, are a waste of money.

Leon Boucher is deputy director of the Centre for Educational Studies in the Department of Education, University of Chester, Cheshire. He has been in Sweden for a number of years and has written a book on the subject, *Press not just*.

overseas



Immigrants in Stockholm. About 10,000 people arrive in Sweden each year. Every immigrant child has the right to mother tongue teaching.

## Own language, own culture

Sweden has committed itself wholeheartedly to an ambitious network of bilingual education for its minorities. Hilary Wilce reports

Colombo Lombardi, a political refugee from Argentina, teaches in a primary school in Rinkeby, on the north-west edge of Stockholm.

Among the pattern of many cities, Stockholm's problem areas are the far fringes of town, and Rinkeby is one of the most diverse. A campus of concrete blocks grouped around a soulless swimming pool, with an exception of a few houses, it is a school of immigrants, and three languages are spoken in the suburb.

Lombardi has no formal teacher training, but he speaks Spanish and Swedish skills well. He is a man in a country who is striving to implement an ambitious commitment to bilingual education for immigrants.

Lombardi has laid down that the children should be taught in their mother tongue, and that the parents should be involved in the school now use occasional Spanish words when they play.

Mother tongue teaching is generally popular, the says. "We try to educate the parents about the importance of the home language. The local paper, for example, carried a campaign about it recently." Lombardi says that the school has a policy of teaching in the final year of pre-schooling, as well as in the first year of primary school, and can include both subjects in one and through the home language. School programmes are set up by adult education and parents opportunities.

About a million people in Sweden are immigrants, or from immigrant families, approximately 10 per cent of the population, and the proportion is growing. Immigrants tend to be of child-bearing age and to have larger families than native Swedes. In addition, about 10,000 people arrive to live in Sweden each year.

By far the largest national group is Polish, followed by Yugoslavs, Danes, Norwegians, Greeks, West Germans, Turks and Poles. Sweden welcomes political refugees and has taken in a sizeable number of Vietnamese boat people.

Mother tongue teaching in the school system is arranged according to local circumstances. Schools with only a few immigrants may have a travelling language teacher, called in for a few hours a week, but in areas of immigrant concentration, mother tongue teaching tends to be more comprehensive and organized, so that immigrant children can be taught entirely in their own language for their first two years of

The legislation has been supported by healthy funding, which is not expected to suffer seriously from current belt tightening. About 360m kronor (€36m) is being spent this year on bilingual teaching in schools, with further grants to adult and pre-school programmes.

But, inevitably, the lofty aims of such immigrant policies can only be implemented patchily, depending on the size and spread of language groups, and the availability of mother tongue teachers.

So in Rinkeby, children of six (and sometimes five) who belong to a major language group such as Finnish or Turkish, are able to attend a nursery school where a teacher speaks their native tongue. Children who belong to smaller language groups might have contact with a travelling home language teacher, but the more obscure language groups, such as minority Pakistani languages, cannot be catered for at present.

Gullmar Lombardi has only one Spanish child in his year 15-strong nursery, and his mother team glad of their morning greeting in Spanish. Ingrid Lundgren, head of the school, says that Swedish children in the school now use occasional Spanish words when they play.

Mother tongue teaching is generally popular, the says. "We try to educate the parents about the importance of the home language. The local paper, for example, carried a campaign about it recently." Lombardi says that the school has a policy of teaching in the final year of pre-schooling, as well as in the first year of primary school, and can include both subjects in one and through the home language. School programmes are set up by adult education and parents opportunities.

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school, only gradually transferring to learning in Swedish, with Finnish kept up as an active supplementary school language.

Last year Sweden ran 500 home language classes, in 11 languages. Overall more than 50 languages were being taught to about 47,000 comprehensive school pupils, out of a total of 85,500 immigrant children. Bertil Jakobsson, of the National Board of Education, estimates that about 4,000 immigrant children wanted mother tongue teaching which could not be supplied.

In Sweden today, there is no doubt about the value of bilingual teaching. Discussion centres only on how it can best be extended or improved. A National Board of Education working party has come up with a mass of both short- and long-term recommendations on this, suggesting that teaching in the mother tongue should be adopted if it is thought to be academically necessary. The home language should be used as a supplementary learning language for a lengthy educational period.

As such policies become more firmly entrenched part of the educational system, many people will be watching anxiously to see how they have the hoped-for effects of boosting the number of immigrant children achieving full-time education until they are 19, and cutting the high level of immigrant unemployment. Racial prejudices simmer under the surface in Sweden, and there is a deep fear of what could happen if economic and ethnic splits develop unchecked.

In the social rather than the individual sense, bilingual education is seen as preventative medicine avoiding a costly later cure. The medicine is firmly believed to work, but the time span has been too short for any results to show. Until then, faith and principle alone keep the programme developing. There is plenty of both.

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## overseas

Chris Mosey on the future of the upper secondaries

# Changes are on the way, but range of studies will stay under one roof

A question mark hangs over the future of Sweden's integrated upper secondary school.

A government commission has been reviewing this area since 1976 and when it reports back, in an estimated one to three years' time, it could recommend considerable changes.

But according to Mrs Britt Wilson-Lohse of the National Board of Education there is unlikely to be any alteration in the basic thinking behind the establishment of the integrated upper secondary school in 1971.

This aimed at greater equality of opportunity for pupils, and in spite of the fact that Sweden has since then ceased to be governed by the Social Democrats, equality remains a major object of the exercise.

Until 1971 Sweden had three separate forms of upper secondary schooling - gymnasium, continuation school and vocational school. These were amalgamated into one integrated upper secondary school.

Some 75 per cent of children leaving the compulsory comprehensive school at 16 go on to attend upper secondary schools, which exist in 125 municipalities.

However, with youth unemployment rising and with the scrapping earlier this year of local authority subsidised jobs for school-leavers, this figure is expected to rise.

"We often have a population bulge at the moment among the 16-18 age group," Mrs Wilson-Lohse said. "This could lead to problems."

Studies can take from two to four years depending on the line of study chosen. The arts, social science, economics and natural science lines take three years. The technical lines take four years, although it is possible to obtain a leaving certificate after only three years.

Completion of three years' upper secondary schooling is a general qualification for university and college studies, subject to the attainment of a certain minimum average mark.

Other lines of study take two years. A leaving certificate from a two-year social, technical and economics line can qualify a student to apply for teacher training, school of journalism and computer technique courses.

About 15 upper secondary schools offer more specifically vocational lines. All of these take two years. Apart from these there are various kinds of special vocational courses and more advanced special courses.

Pupils choosing a two-year vocational line are first given a broad basic education. Specialisation is introduced gradually.

A legacy from Sweden's 44 years of unbroken Social Democratic rule is that the upper secondary school is directed to strive for greater contact with working life.

"There were slogans like 'break down the walls of school'. But contact with working life is better in some areas than in others," Mrs Wilson-Lohse said.

Another legacy at this attitude, rooted in Social Democratic thinking on education, is the rule that teachers should be able to work for two weeks in industry so that they will better understand the demands of working life, although the taking up of this opportunity has been disappointing. Only a couple of hundred teachers a year use state grants to do this.

However, an increasing problem is the over-growth number of pupils with part-time jobs. "There is a lot of pressure on teenagers today to combine - records, holidays abroad, clothes etc. Sometimes they will take quite demanding work in the evenings and obviously their schoolwork suffers as a result," Mrs Wilson-Lohse said.

"Swedish schools are very free. This is a positive thing but it also demands responsibility from the pupils. Not all pupils will accept that responsibility and there can be problems with truancy and so on."

with immigrant children who are used to very authoritarian schools. When they encounter our freedom they don't know how to deal with it."

The average number of pupils per school is 800-900 but some schools have more than 1,000, others less than 500.

"We have all become much more conscious lately of the need to cut spending. We can no longer afford to be so generous with books and equipment as we were during the 1960s, but I hope we will not allow the human side of education to diminish too much in favour of purely practical education," Mrs Wilson-Lohse said.

One cost-cutting move that could come to pass is the possible merging of the adult gymnasium with the ordinary upper secondary school. The adult gymnasium caters primarily for adults who were unable to receive a gymnasium education in their youth.

"There is a possibility that in future we would mix adults and teenagers together. There are arguments in favour of this anyway and nowadays, with the need to save money, it has become very topical because it would be an economy measure," Mrs Wilson-Lohse said.

Far the time being the general aims of the upper secondary

schools, as stated by the National Board of Education remain as follows: "By putting all study years under the same roof it is hoped to provide students with freedom of choice and it is hoped that they will choose the study routes that suit them best, without being swayed by outmoded ideas of class and status."

"In this way it is also hoped to break down the artificial barriers which have hitherto existed between vocational and more academic education. Moreover, the trend today is in favour of a greater proportion of theoretical studies in the vocational lines, and the theoretical study routes of the future will be given more practical content."

"The aim is for all study years to prepare students for life studies and vocational activity."

Nevertheless, there remains a government commission, a change in political climate (the Social Democrats, received a decisive defeat in the recent Conservative-led election), and the cutting of public sector expenditure as the nation deals with a parlous balance of payments situation.

The question is whether the intentions can survive, or if pragmatism prevails?

## Sweden's education system

**PRE-SCHOOLING** is the responsibility of health and social services departments. Children have a right to one year in nursery school before entering primary school. Younger children are offered places if they are available. Day care centres and play-groups are available in places.

**COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL** (grundskola) takes children at seven, for nine years of compulsory schooling. Schools are unified, but divided into junior (grades 1-3), middle (grades 4-5), and senior (grades 6-7). The official curriculum lays down goals, guidelines and recommendations.

Immigrant children have a right to tuition in their native language. In school year is divided into spring and autumn terms, and is about 36 weeks long.

**UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL** (gymnasium) is an integrated compulsory school for 16-19 year-olds. It offers two, three and four-year lines of study, and all kinds of vocational preparation for pre-university studies.

**HIGHER EDUCATION** (högskola) is a unified system of higher education which offers a full range of post-secondary education. Undergraduate studies are divided into five main groups and one and a half-year courses. Short courses are also available. Work experience counts as a student admission qualification. Doctoral studies normally take four years.

**MUNICIPAL HIGHER EDUCATION** involves post-secondary vocational courses run by the local authorities, mainly in the health care field.

**ADULT EDUCATION** includes programmes of secondary education run by the local authorities for students who wish to make up their schooling, and a wide range of courses offered by government-subsidised study circles affiliated to union, political party and church organisations. Folk high schools offer a distinctive Scandinavian system of full-time adult education.

The British Library is the national library for the United Kingdom. Its Research and Development Department's reports cover librarianship and information science.

Two recent reports are

5467 'Educating library users in secondary schools' and

5511 'The need to know: teaching the importance of information to schoolchildren'

Each report costs £5.00 until 31 December, 1980, and thereafter £7.50.

Details of these reports, and a free catalogue of all reports available, from Publications Section, British Library Lending Division, Boston Spa, West Yorkshire LS23 7BQ, United Kingdom.

# Quantity, but what about the quality?

Doubts and uncertainties are widely voiced about the radical reform of higher education. Now adjustments are being made. By Hilary Wilce

The sequence of mammoth convulsions by which Sweden has reformed its education system only reached higher education in 1977.

Although many of the dramatic changes brought in the wake of the 1977 act of deliberation, the system has barely had time to settle into place.

But doubts and uncertainties about the reform are expressed in many quarters and it seems that more than time will be needed to make it work as well as Sweden's other educational innovations.

The changes were bold and far-reaching. Until recently Swedish higher education was small and highly traditional - in 1950 the total number of students was only about 15,000.

Explosive expansion in the 1950s and 1960s, coupled with revolutionary changes in the school system, led to a major reorganisation which aimed at promoting equality, and creating a system able to adopt and renew itself according to changing conditions.

Admissions, which had been widening gradually, were opened up to allow access to various groups of students: those with two or three years of upper secondary schooling; those with a folk high school (adult education college) qualification; and, most importantly, those over 25 with four or more years of work experience.

Basic competency in Swedish and English, plus specific requirements for individual courses, were the academic requirements.

Undergraduate studies were organised into five vocational sectors: technical, administrative-economic, welfare, medical-paramedical, and cultural-information.

Inevitably, when admissions were widened there was a rush to take up opportunities to study, and well-qualified school leavers have found it increasingly difficult to get university places.

Their growing frustration, along with fears that the new admissions rules might favour the doblers and

These are established by Parliament, which each year decides the balance of places according to national needs. Course content is the responsibility of the National Board of Universities and Colleges, higher education's central administrative body, while local, individual and short courses are organized at the local level.

The six universities and various colleges in Sweden were brought together into a unified system encompassing most kinds of post-secondary education from vocational training to postgraduate research.

Six regional boards oversee this all-in system, allocating funds for about 100 special courses and supervising the geographical spread of resources within their regions.

The regional boards, like the university and faculty boards, all have members representing outside interests such as trade unions and employers, and provide a means of involving them closely in the running of higher education.

These changes were designed to decentralise decision-making, make higher education more responsive to the needs of the labour market and link it more closely with society outside its walls.

Widened admissions were intended to promote equality by offering opportunities to new sections of society (as late as 1970, nearly one-third of 30-35-year-olds had only seven years of elementary schooling) and to encourage the ideal of life-long, recurrent education.

It is obviously too soon to say if such aims are going to be achieved, although some changes are already apparent. The average age of students has jumped dramatically. In 1954, 10 per cent of students were older than 25; by 1974 the figure was 55 per cent. However, the hoped-for equality of access seems elusive, and 80 per cent of students still come from the most favoured 5 per cent of the population.

Inevitably, when admissions were widened there was a rush to take up opportunities to study, and well-qualified school leavers have found it increasingly difficult to get university places.

Their growing frustration, along with fears that the new admissions rules might favour the doblers and



Jan-Erik Wikström, Minister of Education, refutes charges of anti-intellectualism.

part-time browsers, have led to the quota for school leaver admissions being raised from 20 to 30 per cent.

Chancellor Carl-Gustaf Andrén, the new head of the National Board of Universities and Colleges, says that getting the admissions policy right is a major headache. "We are on the way, but it is still very difficult."

Another worry of his is that the present organization of undergraduate study lines encourages students to hop from subject to subject, rather than to study one subject in depth - with poor consequences for the state of Swedish research.

Privately some Swedish academics voice serious worries about the quality of higher education and the OECD examiners summed up a number of anxieties they had about the state of teaching and research by pointing out that educational reforms in Sweden tend to be based on a "protection of desired social outcomes of equality and of renewal which derive from what is felt to be desired by the whole society. What is lacking is any associated analysis of the conditions which make for

good teaching, learning, research and scholarship."

The examiners also expressed worries that the drive to involve all sectors of Swedish society in high education decision-making, by the elaborate hierarchy of boards, may have been at the expense of the wisdom of those who know the field best. "Has the consent of the trade union movement been thought more important than the consent of those whose own motivation is essential to the improvement, and self-renewal, of education?"

One very messy part of the reformed administration is the system of regional boards, which were created as a political compromise between those who wanted outside groups very closely involved in higher education's affairs, and those who didn't, and subsequently seem to have pleased no one. "All the universities believe the regional boards are obsolete," according to Professor Hans Meijer, rector of Linköping University, although the Minister of Education, Mr Jan-Erik Wikström, defends them as necessary intermediary bodies. "Someone has to speak for the small universities and colleges."

Mr Wikström refutes charges of falling standards and anti-intellectualism. Such allegations are made throughout the developed world, he says, pointing out that the vast expansion of higher education must mean wider intakes and new kinds of learning.

However, as he prepares to axe 150m kroner (15m) from his 5,000m kroner (£500m) higher education budget this year - a cut of about three per cent - and anticipates similar cuts for the following years, he says, resources will remain stretched. What will be trimmed, instead, are undergraduate courses and course places.

Spending cuts are a novelty in Swedish education, and planners are bleak about the prospect of taking the knife to a system which has until now been buoyed up with optimism and expansion. "The serious problem now is lack of money," Chancellor Andrén says. "And my greatest problem is to preserve enthusiasm and to help people to see a way through the difficult years."

More than one in four is learning something, somewhere. Chris Mosey reports

# Study leave encourages adults to become pupils

More than a quarter of the adult population of Sweden is studying something or other in its spare time.

The 1,200,000 people concerned are involved in an amazing variety of activities ranging from serious studies to improve their qualifications and job chances, to picking up a smattering of Greek for a starter holiday, to - at the other end of the scale - how to be a more efficient dustman and how to succeed as a traffic warden.

The popularity of adult education has grown steadily in the wake of legislation which has given workers greater opportunities for courses offered by government-subsidised study circles affiliated to union, political party and church organisations. Folk high schools offer a distinctive Scandinavian system of full-time adult education.

During the 1960s and '70s, adult education was a growth sector with more and more courses and a ready supply of students from both central and local government.

Three years ago, as clouds began to gather over what had been until then a relatively sunny national economic horizon, the brakes were slowly applied.

It was decided that a colling of the number of courses, said by Axel Sand, of the National Board of Education.

Today in the wake of the Government's announcement of a 6.5b kroner (£650m) savings package, the number of courses is being cut. The cuts are being made in a number of ways. The state grant for secondary schools, for example, is being cut. Adult education programmes, which are a form of adult education, are also being cut.

In trouble with a proposal to cut government support by 130m kroner (£13m). Quite what this will mean has not yet been worked out in detail.

The Government's savings package is to be voted on later this session. Despite fierce attacks by the socialist opposition, there is little doubt it will be passed by Parliament.

Adult education students in the Stockholm area have held a meeting to protest against the cuts. Even before the cuts have come into effect, shortages of funds in the municipalities have led to study assistance grants being refused to many would-be adult students and the capital has been particularly badly hit in this respect.

After witnessing a steady widening of adult education, it is difficult for Swedes to accept the limits now imposed.

None the less, a lot of money is still being spent on this sector.

The study circles in 1980-81 will receive 848m kroner (£84m) in state subsidies.

The adult education associations that run these are linked to the union movement, church federations, the temperance movement, and various political parties. Each association has one or several affiliated study circles.

Each autumn, Swedish letterboxes are crisscrossed with leaflets advertising courses by this baffling roster of associations.

of associations. There are a total of 289,000 study circles with 4.7m participants in the various courses. These are oriented mainly towards leisure time activities like art appreciation, bookkeeping, and home psychology courses such as understanding teenagers and how to adapt to life as a pensioner. During the 1970s, a proportion of desired social outcomes of equality and of renewal which derive from what is felt to be desired by the whole society. What is lacking is any associated analysis of the conditions which make for

teaching costs at "more than 500m kroner (£50m) - very cheap" compared with other forms of education.

State subsidies in 1980-81 will be 558m kroner (£56m). This does not include money paid in study assistance grants.

Tuition is free and in some municipalities textbooks also are provided free.

The residential adult colleges, or folk high schools, are the third main form of adult education in Sweden and are also the oldest.

They are specifically Scandinavian: a type of boarding school owned either by county and local councils or by trade unions, churches, temperance societies and other non-profit making organizations.

They set their own curriculum but are subject to inspection by the National Board of Education, and cater for 15,000 students in two- or three-year courses, and 200,000 on shorter courses, which can cover such extremes as weaving and understanding modern Swedish job security legislation.

In 1980-81, the folk high schools will receive 321m kroner (£32m). The trend is adult education in the future would seem to be an increasing emphasis on vocational courses. In a survey carried out a few years ago, adult Swedes said they wanted adult education that would help them get better jobs.

Mr Lars-Erik Nilsson estimates that about 155,000 adults are studying via this system, 40,000 of these are taking elementary school courses and 65,000 general upper secondary school courses, while 60,000 are taking vocational courses.

There are also some 8,000-9,000 on special courses for the unemployed.

Mr Lars-Erik Nilsson estimates that about 155,000 adults are studying via this system, 40,000 of these are taking elementary school courses and 65,000 general upper secondary school courses, while 60,000 are taking vocational courses.

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## Burlinghead Secondary School

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SCALE 2—MUSIC

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Please quote reference number ES 14/11 when making your application.

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SCALE 1 (TEMPORARY)—BOYS' PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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## Deputy Headships Senior Masters/Mistresses

## Scale 1 Posts

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## Secondary Music continued

### HUMBERSIDE COUNTY COUNCIL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

**PHYSICS MUSIC SUBJECT:** Invited for January or April 1981 a full-time TEACHER of the GCSE to join a lively department of musical instrumentals. There may be opportunities for some evening work. Applicants should have a degree in Music and/or a recognised teaching or performing diploma. Application forms available from the Education Officer, County Buildings, Victoria Gate, Hull, to be returned by November 28.

**LONDON, N.15**  
OUR LADY'S CONVENT HIGH SCHOOL  
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**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**  
Applications are invited from qualified teachers for the following posts:  
**JOSEPH WHITAKER COMMUNITY SCHOOL**  
WATSON ROAD, HAYWICK, Notts.  
Headmaster: W. B. Price, B.Sc., Dip. Ed.  
Mixed: 1,270 to 1,310  
For Easter or January if possible. The school is a full-time day school with a comprehensive curriculum. It is a large school with a wide range of facilities. The Headmaster is a well-qualified teacher with extensive experience. The school is a member of the Nottingham Education Committee.

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## WOODSIDE SCHOOL

Woodside Road, Pilefold, London E13 8RX  
Head Teacher: Mr. F. Jones  
Number on roll: 928

## HEAD OF UPPER SCHOOL

Scale 4  
Required: Easter, 1981.

An enthusiastic and experienced teacher is required for this interesting and demanding post. The successful candidate will be expected to oversee the social and curricular needs of all pupils in the Fifth and Sixth Year.

This vacancy has occurred through the promotion of the present holder.

The School would welcome visits from prospective candidates.

London Allowance £769, plus Social Priority Allowance.

Application forms and further particulars available from the undersigned, to whom completed forms should be returned by 2nd December, 1980.

Director of Education, Education Offices, Broadway, Stratford, London E15 4BH.

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## YOUTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICE continued

### CHINWALL AND ISLES OF SCHILLY AREA HEALTH AUTHORITY

#### HEALTH EDUCATION OFFICER

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Salary in accordance with the current rates of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Health Education Officers (NHS) 1979-80, £8,500 to £11,000 per annum, plus pension and other benefits.

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## Examiners

EAST MIDLAND  
REGIONAL EXAMINATIONS  
BOARD

Applications are invited for the following examinations:

**CHIEF EXAMINER IN PHYSICS** (Ordinary level, 1981).

**CHIEF EXAMINER IN MATHEMATICS** (Ordinary level, 1981).

Further details and application forms may be obtained from the Secretary, East Midlands Regional Examinations Board, 100, Victoria Road, Nottingham N1 1JH. Tel: 0532 451111. Applications should be received not later than Monday, December 1, 1980.

**LONDON REGIONAL EXAMINATIONS BOARD**

Applications are invited for a **MODERATOR IN SOCIAL STUDIES** for the 1981-82 year.

Application forms and further details may be obtained from the Secretary, London Regional Examinations Board, 100, Victoria Road, London W12 9LJ. Tel: 01-874 4111. Applications should be received not later than Monday, December 1, 1980.

## CALMA

Is an American-based company specializing in the production of computer systems for design applications. These applications cover integrated circuits, printed circuit boards, and mechanical design. We are growing rapidly and have recently opened a new European customer support facility located in Kingston, Surrey, which is centered in providing training and consulting to our customers on system usage and applications.

To support this activity we need three young teachers with experience of teaching adult students, to develop courses in the above-mentioned fields.

The successful candidates are likely to have specialized in an engineering subject, mechanical or electronic, or in descriptive maths, mathematics or physics. They will be currently situated within commuting distance of Kingston-upon-Thames.

The ability to speak a European language would be an asset, as would some computing experience, although this is not essential, as full training would be given.

Conditions of employment will reflect the high calibre of people being sought with salaries circa £9,000.

Please write in the first instance to:

**CALMA COMPANY**  
Neville House, 55 Eden Street  
Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey

## BEC MODERATORS

The Business Education Council would like to hear from those with suitable experience of BEC courses who would be interested in an appointment as a BEC Moderator on a part-time basis. There will be vacancies in 1981 for Moderators for BEC General, National and Higher National courses and appointments will be made on a geographical basis.

Application forms can be obtained from:

**"Moderators"**  
Business Education Council  
Berkshire House  
188/173 High Holborn  
London WC1V 7AG  
Telephone: 01-373 7088 Ext. 24

BEC BUSINESS  
EDUCATION  
COUNCIL

## Graphics Designer

£4,118 (at age 21) - £6,029.

If you feel you have a flair and experience to help promote Health-Education activities, we now have an opportunity within our small Design team in London. You'll be involved in a wide range of work including preparing exhibition aids, display material, artwork, making visual aids, posters and leaflets.

Naturally you'll need good all-round experience and a degree in graphics with some knowledge of silk screen and offset litho.

Application form/job description available from Area Personnel Department, Insurance House, Insurance House, London, W.C.1. Tel: 01-272 2323 ext. 233.

Closing date 20th November, 1980.

CANDIAN & ISINGTON  
AREA HEALTH AUTHORITY TEACHING

## Librarians

HARINGEY  
LIBRARIAN FORSTER SCHOOL

For further details see under 'Librarians' in the 14.11.80 issue of the *Times Educational Supplement*.

NORTH DEVON  
TRUST

Required in May 1981 for a full-time post in the North Devon Trust. The post holder will be responsible for the management of the Trust's library and for the provision of books and materials for the Trust's activities.

DUNHAM  
LIBRARIAN

For further details see under 'Librarians' in the 14.11.80 issue of the *Times Educational Supplement*.

CORNWALL AND  
ISLES OF SCILLY AREA  
HEALTH AUTHORITY

For further details see under 'Librarians' in the 14.11.80 issue of the *Times Educational Supplement*.

DUNHAM  
LIBRARIAN

For further details see under 'Librarians' in the 14.11.80 issue of the *Times Educational Supplement*.

DUNHAM  
LIBRARIAN

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